

Conflict and Compromise between the Jehovah's Witnesses and Nazis during the Holocaust

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When people hear the word “Holocaust”, they think of Jews who were persecuted due to racial differences, but they may not be aware that Jehovah’s Witnesses also suffered due to other causes. Prior to World War II, the Nazis came to power under Hitler. Germany rearmed its military forces by recruiting as many people as possible, including Jehovah’s Witnesses. Many Witnesses refused to join the army since it went against the Bible’s command that people should “love their neighbors.” Other conflicts involved the Witnesses refusal to salute and say “Heil Hitler,” their noncompliance with the draft laws, and the Nazis’ disapproval of how Witnesses raised their children. Each side offered compromises but they were not accepted. The word compromise applies to a concession from each opposing side that tries “to find or follow a way between extremes.”¹ Many Jehovah’s Witnesses didn’t accept the concessions that the Nazis offered and end up suffering persecution.

During the early 1870s, a studious advocate of the Bible, Charles Taze Russell, meditated on and followed what he found in the Bible. In Allegheny, Pennsylvania, he formed a group known as “Bible Students.”² In July 1879, “*Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*” became the monthly magazine that helped people understand the Bible and bring comfort. After settling in the United States and

¹ *Merriam-Webster*, 10th ed. “Compromise”

² In 1931, the name “Bible Students” was changed to “Jehovah’s Witnesses” due to a Bible verse found in Isaiah 43:10.

establishing the Watchtower Society of Pennsylvania, they started spreading out to other countries like Germany.³

In the 1870's, missionaries and Bible Students traveled to Germany to share what they learned with family members, friends, and those that wanted to hear the Bible's message. Through the help of Charles Taze Russell in 1891, and his assistant editor, Otto A. Kötitz, copies of *The Watchtower* were translated into German. The organization slowly increased, but by the 1930s, there were about 25,000 Jehovah's Witnesses⁴ out of 55 million Germans in Germany.⁵

At the same time, the Nazis rose to power as Hitler became chancellor of Germany.⁶ His goal was to strengthen the political and military power of Germany. To accomplish this, he tried to force Witnesses to support the German army but many refused. They chose to follow God's law which commanded: "love your brothers."⁷ Jolene Chu, a researcher for the Watchtower Society and Jehovah's Witnesses in the Nazi era, says: "The Witnesses obey governmental authority, but they owe prior allegiance to God and his Kingdom...if a government demands what God prohibits, or prohibits what God requires, the choice for the individual is clear."⁸ But was that the only reason why the Witnesses refused to join the military and political powers?

³ "Modern Development & Growth." Jehovah's Witnesses-Who Are They? What Do They Believe? Georgetown, Ontario, Canada: Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Canada, 2000, 6.

⁴ "Courageous in the Nazi Peril." *Jehovah's Witnesses*. 8 July 1998. Retrieved 20 Dec. 2007. Pennsylvania: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. [http://www.watchtower.org/e/19980708/article_01.htm]

⁵ "Genocide in the 20th Century." The History Place. 2000. Retrieved 19 Dec. 2007.[http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/genocide/holocaust.htm]

⁶ Hitler became chancellor on January 30, 1933.

⁷ 1 John 3:14-18

⁸ Jolene Chu, "Purple Triangles: "A Story of Spiritual Resistance." Judaism Today. 1999. Retrieved 14 Jan. 2008 [http://www.baycrest.org/Spring%202001/article12.htm]

If Witnesses joined the armed forces for their country, they would be fighting other Witnesses in other countries and misrepresent the God who “is love.”⁹ The Declaration of Facts from Witnesses in 1933 stated: “We have no fight with any persons or religious teachers...it is generally those who claim to represent God and Christ Jesus who are ... our persecutors and who misrepresent us before the governments.”¹⁰ Even though the Witnesses did not want to misrepresent God, what effect did their neutral stand in the government have? The Witnesses’ refusal to take sides in the army conflicted with the Nazis’ goals. Without the Witnesses, they would be short of 25,000 people.¹¹ Nazis also feared that the Witnesses’ decisions would influence other Germans into not joining the armed forces.¹²

The Nazis disliked the fact that the Witnesses refused to salute the German national flag. To the Nazis, saluting the flag meant that an individual gave sovereign respect to the government and supported its organization. However to the Witnesses, the Ten Commandments stated that it was wrong to “bow down” to any “carved image” or symbol like the swastika flag¹³ because it represented total submission to the government.

As a dictator, Hitler wanted everyone to worship him by forcing the Germans to “Heil Hitler.” Heiling Hitler was wrong to Witnesses. A Witness girl named Simone A. Liebster said when ordered to heil Hitler, “According to Acts 4:12, ‘There is no salvation

⁹ 1 John 4:8

¹⁰ *Jehovah’s Witnesses*, 4.

¹¹ Even though there was a large population of about 55 million people in Germany, that population included many who were in concentration camps such as Jews and gypsies.

¹² *History Place*, 1.

¹³ Exodus 20:4, 5

in anyone else' ...Since 'Heil' stands for having salvation by someone, I cannot attribute this salvation to any man, including Hitler."¹⁴ Like this girl, Witnesses chose not to "Heil Hitler" because it would mean that they agreed that Hitler was the "Savior of Germany." If the Bible said that Christ was the "Savior" of all mankind, why should they assert: "Heil Hitler"? Witnesses also refused to "Heil Hitler" because it made Hitler the rightful ruler rather than Jehovah God, Christ's heavenly father. It meant that Witnesses supported Hitler's actions and rule. It lowered God as the entity that should be respected.¹⁵ Hitler was the "Führer," leader of Germany. He wanted full authority and to show all the other countries that everyone under him loved him. As stated in the Witnesses' *Watchtower* article, he wanted to show power by "means of regimenting the people in continental Europe."¹⁶

Witnesses' children were in a precarious spot. Witness children refused to salute the national flag and announce "Heil Hitler."¹⁷ Since Jehovah's Witness adults had already chosen not to join the army, seeing children refuse to support authorities angered Hitler. Through propaganda and influence, children could be trained to turn against their own parents who might speak against the government. Hitler felt that

¹⁴ Simone A. Liebster, "Into the Lions Den." Facing the Lion. 6 July 1943. Retrieved 11 Oct. 2007. [<http://www.facingthelion.com/excerpt.htm>]

¹⁵ University of Minnesota. "Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany." Center for Holocaust & Genocide Studies. Retrieved 29 Nov. 2007. [<http://chgs.umn.edu/museum/responses/steyer/jwitnesses/steyer/jwitnesses.html>]

¹⁶ "Fight Carried into the Law Courts." Watchtower Society. 15 July 1955. Watchtower.

¹⁷ In the 1930s, Jehovah's Witnesses in the United States stopped saluting the American flag which was then done with a stiff-arm salute like the Nazi salute. The US Supreme Court cases of *Gobitas* and *Barnette* involved Witness children expelled from public school for refusing to salute. They chose not to salute in respect to the German Witnesses who had to be persecuted for not saluting.

gathering children into the Hitler Youth League would move them to fight for the army. He did not want Witness children to influence the minds of other German children.¹⁸

When World War II was swelling, the government forced people to salute and say “Heil Hitler.” As a young girl, Simone refused and was sent to a “re-educational center” that gave her strenuous work. Teachers tested Simone’s integrity by making her wash bed sheets in cold water. She recalls other labors and punishment:

“I had to saw up to two feet in diameter using a lumberjack’s saw...We had a bath twice a year, and we washed our hair once a year. Punishment was food privation or a beating...I had to do the cooking for all 37 children...For our teachers, I had to cook meat, bake cakes, and prepare vegetables...There was no playtime”¹⁹

In addition to her labor, Simone could not read her Bible²⁰ in public or contact her parents who had been sent to concentration camps in Mauthausen and Gaggenuau.²¹

Jehovah’s Witnesses were then called “Ernstes Bibelforscher.”²² The Nazis used this term to accuse the Witnesses of supporting Jews because both groups accepted and followed the teachings of the Old Testament. They were also accused of worshipping the same God as the Jews.²³ These accusations were used as an excuse to persecute the Witnesses. “Swiss theologian Karl Barth ... wrote: ‘The accusation that Jehovah’s Witnesses are linked with the Communists [Jews], can only be due to ... intentional

¹⁸ 1974 Yearbook

¹⁹ Liebster, *Into the Lion’s Den*.

²⁰ The Bible served as a comfort to Simone because she was alone.

²¹ Abraham J. Peck, “Founders/Education.” Arnold Liebster Foundation. Association of Holocaust Organizations. Retrieved 5 Nov. 2007. [<http://alst.org/pages-us/founders.html>]

²² This was a name used by the Witnesses to identify themselves as studious Bible students.

²³ Minnesota.

misunderstanding’.”²⁴ The Nazis may have known that the Witnesses did not mean any harm to the government but intentionally found fault with them. Witnesses were then, not allowed to continue their activities or exercise their faith publicly, such as attending the meetings or going “door-to-door” to distribute magazines that served to educate people about the Bible. This conflicted with the Witnesses’ religious objective to teach their beliefs. It was an important tool of the Witnesses in spreading the Bible’s message to all sorts of people.²⁵

The Nazis passed the Reichstag Fire Decree²⁶ “to suppress Hitler’s enemies, including the Witnesses.”²⁷ Article 1 stated: “the Constitution of the German Reich are suspended until further notice. The following are therefore permitted: limits on personal freedom, freedom of the press, the freedom to organize and assemble.”²⁸ On June 25, 1933, in Berlin, there was an attendance of 7,000 delegates that arrived to adopt the resolution called, “Declaration of Facts.”²⁹ It objected to the restrictions that were imposed on the Witnesses. The efforts of the society of Witnesses were not successful. By the summer of 1933, Witnesses were banned or prohibited to continue their activities in “several German states.”³⁰

²⁴ *Jehovah’s Witnesses*, 2.

²⁵ Victims of the Nazi Era. Washington, D.C.: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

²⁶ The Nazis passed the Reichstag Fire Decree on February 28, 1933.

²⁷ Chu, Judaism, 1.

²⁸ “Decree of the Reich President for the Protection of the People and State.” University of South Alabama. 28 Feb. 1933. Retrieved 14 Jan. 2008. [<http://southalabama.edu/history/faculty/rogers/348/reichstagf>

²⁹ Due to the decree, the second president of the Watchtower Society, Joseph F. Rutherford, decided to start a campaign with the branch office manager in Germany, Paul Balzereit, another Witness, to placate the Nazis and show that the “Witnesses posed no threat to the German people and State.” They were thus able to come up with the “Declaration of Facts.”

³⁰ *Jehovah’s Witnesses*, 2.

PBS, a television station that provides “a broad array of educational services” reported that “Nazis arrested thousands of men and women. Many faced interrogations and torture...Nazi officials...took nearly 600 Witness children away and placed them in reformatories...Nearly 2,000 died during the Hitler years.”³¹ The Nazis tried every form of persecution to break the Witnesses’ integrity. The Witnesses’ religious literature was confiscated and meetings were ended by troops. Families were separated and sent to concentration camps as early as 1935.³²

In 1938, symbols were given to different groups to help the Nazis identify the reason an individual was in the concentration camp. The Jews wore the yellow star, the gypsies wore the brown triangle, criminals wore green, political prisoners wore red. Jehovah’s Witnesses wore the purple triangle because the Nazis saw the Witnesses as a distinct prisoner group.³³ Even though they viewed the Witnesses’ stand as being politically subversive in fighting against the government or criminal for being a banned religion, they did not give them the green or red triangle. The Jews and gypsies were considered “racial enemies,” but the Witnesses were enemies because they sought to obey God’s commands in the midst of opposers. Still, the Nazis noted the Witnesses’ loyalty to the Bible. Even the leader of the SS, Heinrich Himmler, observed: “Among the positive things about the Bibelforscher is that they don’t do military service or work for the war...They are industrious and sincere people...They should preach to people to

³¹ “Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Holocaust.” PBS. 18 April 2007. Retrieved 29 Nov. 2007. [<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/knocking/holocaust.html>]

³² Hans-Hermann Dirksen. “Chronology: Development and Persecution of Jehovah’s Witnesses.” Persecution and Resistance of Jehovah’s Witnesses. 14 Jan. 2008 [<http://www.edition-temmen.com/timetable/index.htm>]

³³ Historians don’t know why the Nazis chose purple for the Witnesses; maybe it was their way of mocking their belief in God’s Kingdom, purple being the color of royalty and spirituality.

transmit their peaceable ideas.”³⁴ Despite such seeming admiration, the government persisted in persecuting the Witnesses in an effort to break their faith.

Witnesses resolved to continue their activities in secret. If they knew someone was interested, they would talk to them about the Bible. Sadly, the Nazis and Gestapo continued to send out a “special unit to combat” and chase after Witnesses responsible for printing literature or for extending the Bible’s message to other people. After gathering the Witnesses, the Nazis relocated them to concentration camps the way they did to Jews.³⁵ On October 7, 1934, a “Statement of Principles” was sent out for every congregation of Witnesses in Germany to stop the Nazis from hindering them in serving their God.³⁶

The “Statement of Principles” was a letter of declaration from Witnesses advising the German government what the Witnesses chose to do. It was not a compromise but an offer proposed to resolve their conflicts. First it stated that: “The Word of Jehovah God, as set out in the Holy Bible, is the supreme law, and to us it is our sole guide for the reason that we have devoted ourselves to God and are true and sincere followers of Christ Jesus.” This notified the German government of the Witnesses’ submission to everything in the Bible. The second paragraph in the Statement asked the German government to accept their offer by letting Witnesses continue their activities, otherwise, the “blood will be upon” the Nazis or they would be held accountable for opposing the Witnesses. The Statement’s last paragraph asked that

³⁴ “Fascist Repression of Jehovah’s Witnesses.” Jehovah’s Witnesses United. 14 Jan. 2008 [<http://www.jehovah.to/gen/holocaust/fascist.htm>]

³⁵ *Minnesota*.

³⁶ “Statement of Principles.” Jehovah’s Witnesses: Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom. Brooklyn, NY: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1993.

the Witnesses be given the right not to join any political affairs. The Witnesses clarified that they would “do no injury or harm to anyone” including the German government and officials.³⁷

Unfortunately, such a letter of declaration did not work. The Nazis did not care what the Witnesses seemed to offer in compromise because it required the Nazis to support the actions of Jehovah’s Witnesses. Even though the Witnesses stated that they brought no harm to the German government, the government still felt that they were dangerous because they could cause others to follow their actions. The declaration was therefore unsuccessful because even after it was sent out, many Witnesses were still sent to concentration camps. Witnesses remained faithful and loyal to their own God. They continued their activities underground. Since they chose not to submit to the government and conform to the Nazi views, they did not need to join the army or say “Heil Hitler.”³⁸

Unlike the Jews and gypsies who had to stay in the concentration camps, the Witnesses were able to be free. The Nazis distributed a document known as the “Declaration,” allowing Witnesses to escape persecution in the camps.³⁹ It may have been a compromise offered by the Nazis, but it wasn’t. Jolene Chu, the researcher of the Nazi era mentioned earlier states: “the Nazi aim of breaking Witness resolve is found in a remarkable document offered repeatedly to Witness prisoners...In exchange for a

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Victims of the Nazi Era. Washington, D.C.: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

³⁹ The declaration was distributed as early as 1935 in the Moringen concentration camp. By 1937, the declaration was offered to Witnesses in other concentration camps like Buchenwald (Dirksen).

signature, a Witness could walk away free from camp or prison.”⁴⁰ The Nazis’ declaration attempted to destroy the faith of Witnesses. It did not give them freedom because they were forbidden to continue their faith after they leave the camp and had to join the German army or Nationalist party.

The “Declaration” demanded the Witnesses 1) deny their faith, 2) cease any activities associated with the Jehovah’s Witnesses and 3) join the war effort when called upon to do so for the German government.⁴¹ It did not express any views of the Witnesses, but views of the Nazis. The “Declaration” was only an offer on the side of the Nazis to break the faith of Witnesses. A majority of Witnesses chose to persevere as a group without signing even though it meant persecution and death. “Dr. Detlef Garbe, author of an exhaustive volume on the Witnesses, estimates that of the 10,000 Witnesses imprisoned...there were only a few dozen...who signed the so-called declaration.”⁴²

Neither side accepted the offers given because it favored the demand of only one side of the conflicting party.⁴³ The Witnesses had to suffer in various ways under the Nazis. The PBS educational history television station researched that “about 13,400 Witnesses were sent to Nazi prisons and camps.” The Nazis “took nearly 500 Witness children away and placed them in reformatories and Nazi foster homes.” About 2,000

⁴⁰ Chu, Judaism, 4.

⁴¹ “Declaration Denouncing Beliefs.” Jehovah’s Witnesses: Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom. Brooklyn, NY: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1993, 661.

⁴² Chu, Judaism, 4.

⁴³ The Witnesses did not want to conform and the Nazis were stubborn in amending their rules. There were no two-sided compromise.

Witnesses died and 250 Witness men were executed for refusing to join the German army.⁴⁴

Johannes Wrobel, researcher and head of Jehovah's Witness history archives⁴⁵, discusses the watercolor paintings of a Witness prisoner named Johannes Steyer.⁴⁶ A majority of Steyer's paintings depict the prisoners in labor or getting tortured by the Nazis or being forced to sign a declaration.⁴⁷ In his twentieth painting, concentration prisoners wait in a row for roll call. Representing the minds of one of the prisoners, Steyer wrote in German⁴⁸: "I won't come out today ... got an interrogation."⁴⁹ Unlike Steyer and the Witnesses, many Jews lost their trust in God. Elie Wiesel, a Jewish Holocaust survivor says, "God's face is hidden and a flaming sky becomes a graveyard for a vanished people."⁵⁰

Jehovah's Witnesses suffered persecution due to religious conflicts with the Nazis. The Nazis opposed Witnesses for their political neutrality, refusal to join the German army, not saluting the national flag and for not "Heiling Hitler." Children like Simone Liebster chose not to participate in Hitler's youth programs. Witnesses could have signed a declaration to be free but the majority of them refused. The Nazis, on the other hand, refused to amend demands for the Witnesses and murdered about 2,000

⁴⁴ [PBS](#)

⁴⁵ Johannes Wrobel, "The Buchenwald Series: Watercolors by the Jehovah's Witness Johannes Steyer." [Edition-Temmen](http://www.edition-temmen.com/pictures/index.html). Retrieved 11 Oct. 2007 [http://www.edition-temmen.com/pictures/index.html]

⁴⁶ Steyer painted sequential events to depict conditions he saw in the Buchenwald concentration camp. Through his paintings, a view of how life was in the concentration camp can be seen. Wrobel explains the dialogues that Steyer wrote about Hitler and the Nazis in the watercolor paintings.

⁴⁷ His sixth painting shows prisoners working hard and in his eighth painting, a prisoner receives twenty-five lashes by a Nazi. In most of his paintings, he would also put dialogues for people to understand what the Nazis or Hitler did.

⁴⁸ Translated into English.

⁴⁹ Johannes Steyer, "The Buchenwald Series." [Center for Holocaust & Genocide Studies](http://www.chgs.umn.edu/museum/responses/steyer/Buchenwald.html). 16 Oct. 2007. Retrieved 29 Nov. 2007 [http://www.chgs.umn.edu/museum/responses/steyer/Buchenwald.html]

⁵⁰ Louis Weber, [The Holocaust Chronicle](#). Lincolnwood, Illinois: Publications International, Ltd. 2003, 17

lives. Despite all of this conflict, Jehovah's Witnesses stood firm and did not compromise under the pressure of the Nazis. During the research for this paper, I had the unique opportunity to correspond with Simone Liebster, who now lives in southern France. I asked her what her experience as a Jehovah's Witness during the Holocaust meant to her. She wrote me the following:

“The resistance of Jehovah's Witnesses to the Nazis was a moral stand. Their high ethical values, drawn from the Bible, trained their consciences and gave them the strength to love God and their neighbor as themselves. In spite of opposition, persecution, and even death, this history is proof that Christian values can conquer evil.”

Annotated Bibliography

Primary Sources-

"Declaration Denouncing Beliefs." Jehovah's Witnesses: Proclaimers of God's Kingdom. Brooklyn, NY: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1993. *Jehovah's Witnesses were given an opportunity to escape persecution in the concentration camp by signing a document. In this document, a copy of a declaration given by the Nazis is shown. It includes demands that the Nazis wanted from the Witnesses after signing it. This primary document contributes to the historical paper because it gives an inside look at the demands of Hitler and the Nazis.*

"Decree of the Reich President for the Protection of the People and State." University of South Alabama. 28 Feb. 1933. Retrieved 14 Jan. 2008. <<http://www.southalabama.edu/history/faculty/rogers/348/reichstagfiredecree.html>> *This is a primary document that was sent out by the German government prohibiting people to print or say anything against the government. With this document, a perspective of what the Nazis wanted can be seen.*

Liebster, Simone A. "Into the Lions Den." Facing the Lion. 6 July 1943. Retrieved 11 Oct. 2007. <<http://www.facingthelion.com/excerpt.htm>> *This source is an autobiography written by Simone Arnold Liebster describing the opposition she faced from the Nazis while growing up. It gives an in-depth idea of what it was like to be persecuted as a teenager during the Nazis regime. Such an experience will help people see the role of Witness children and their part in enduring persecution during the Nazi era.*

"Statement of Principles." Jehovah's Witnesses: Proclaimers of God's Kingdom. Brooklyn, NY: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1993. *The "Statement of Principles" is a primary document that was sent to the Nazis by the Jehovah's Witness branch so each congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses would not receive persecution from the Nazis. This document supports the historical paper because it serves as one of the compromises or concessions offered on the side of Jehovah's Witnesses*

Steyer, Johannes. "The Buchenwald Series." Center for Holocaust & Genocide Studies. 16 Oct. 2007. Retrieved 29 Nov. 2007 <<http://www.chgs.umn.edu/museum/responses/steyer/buchenwald.html>>

The "Buchenwald Series" are primary visual documents painted by a Witness survivor named Johannes Steyer. His paintings portray Hitler and the Nazis truthfully as the evil leaders of humanity. A total of twenty-seven paintings were painted in sequential order of what he first encountered from the Nazis until the day when he was free from the camp. His paintings are essential to the historical paper because they vividly show people the harsh treatment Jehovah's Witnesses had to endure.

Secondary Sources-

Dirksen, Hans-Hermann. "Chronology: Development and Persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses." Persecution and Resistance of Jehovah's Witnesses. 14 Jan. 2008 <<http://www.edition-temmen.com/timetable/index.htm>>.

This is a secondary source that gives the chronology of events that were involved between the Witnesses and the Nazis. It details the date or year that a document was sent out and when German congregations of Witnesses were banned. Such information is essential for the historical paper because it helps give a more sequential explanation of events.

Chu, Jolene. "Purple Triangles: A Story of Spiritual Resistance." Judaism Today (1999). Retrieved 14 Jan. 2008

<<http://www.baycrest.org/Spring%202001/article12.htm>>

This is a secondary source written by a researcher for the Watchtower Society in New York. She specializes in the history of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Nazi regime and her research contributes greatly to the historical paper because it gives a sequential history of what really happened to Witnesses under Nazi control. One of the topics used from her research paper was on the "Declaration."

"Courageous in the Nazi Peril." Jehovah's Witnesses. 8 July 1998. Retrieved 20 Dec. 2007. Pennsylvania: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. <http://www.watchtower.org/e/19980708/article_01.htm>

As the title is called, this document discusses the courageous actions of Jehovah's Witnesses when they were prohibited from continuing their activities. It also explains their neutral position in government. Such information is needed for the historical paper to explain actions taken to resolve problems between the Witnesses and Nazis.

"Color Purple." Emily Gems. Spring, Ohio. Retrieved 15 Jan. 2008. <<http://crystal-cure.com/purple.html>>

This website focuses on the meaning of color for gems. As a secondary document it supports the historical paper because it gives the meaning of what purple is and how it obtains its meaning. Since the Witnesses wore a purple triangle, it would be good to know why they were designated to wear the purple triangle in the concentration camps.

“Europe.” 1971 Yearbook of Jehovah’s Witnesses. Pennsylvania, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1971.

The Yearbook is a yearly collection produced by Jehovah’s Witnesses informing people of their progress in each country and experiences faced in various situations. In the 1971-Yearbook, a data of the Jehovah’s Witnesses population in Europe during the 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s is given. A paragraph is also given specifying the growth in Germany even though Witnesses were banned. Such data is greatly needed for the historical paper because it numerically shows how their refusal to join the army in Germany could have affected Germany’s military.

“The Fascist Repression of Jehovah’s Witnesses.” Jehovah’s Witness United. 14 Jan. 2008. <<http://www.jehovah.to/gen/holocaust/fascist.htm>>

This is a secondary document that emphasizes the viewpoints of leaders of the Nazis or other non-witnesses on Jehovah’s Witnesses. Such information will give a positive side view of the Witnesses in the historical paper because it gives praise to the Witnesses even from those that opposed the Witnesses.

“Fight Carried into the Law Courts.” Watchtower Society. 15 July 1955. Watchtower.

This document focuses on the reason why Jehovah’s Witnesses do not participate in saluting the flag. It also focuses on the history of Supreme Court rulings that were fought over to win the right of Jehovah’s Witnesses to not participate in saluting to the national flag. Such information explains why Witnesses did not salute Germany’s flag in World War II.

“Genocide in the 20th Century.” The History Place. 2000. Retrieved 19 Dec. 2007. <<http://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/genocide/holocaust.htm>>

This secondary document discusses the actions of Hitler against the Jews and gives a sequential event of what happened throughout the years of his rule as a dictator. It also gives a very important detail for the historical paper which is the population of people and Witnesses living in Germany.

“Germany.” 1974 Yearbook of Jehovah’s Witnesses. Pennsylvania, Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1974.

This Yearbook contains the history of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Germany after the Holocaust ended. It discusses how Witnesses were established in Germany before World War I and II came about. Such knowledge helps explain how the Jehovah’s Witnesses appeared in Germany when they were first established in America.

“Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Holocaust.” PBS. 18 April 2007. Retrieved 29 Nov. 2007. <<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/knocking/holocaust.html>>

There were many things that Jehovah’s Witnesses did not do under the Nazis. They refused to perform rituals for the Nazis, serve in politics, join the Hitler

Youth and Nazi Party, vote in elections, and perform military service. As a consequence, Hitler demanded the Witnesses be exterminated for their disloyalty. Many of them lost their jobs and students could not go to school. This secondary document is important because it details factors that angered Hitler.

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition. New York: Merriam-Webster; 2003.

This is a secondary source that explains what the word compromise means. There are several meanings for the word compromise but only one definition applies to the historical paper. It says, "to find or follow a way between extremes." Such a definition can help identify the meaning of compromise in the historical paper. It is not a mutual concession but an offer from two sides of an opposing party.

Peck, Abraham J. "Founders/ Education." Arnold Liebster Foundation. Association of Holocaust Organizations. Retrieved 5 Nov. 2007. <<http://alst.org/pages-us/founders.html>>
This website is founded by Holocaust-era survivors Max Liebster and Simone Arnold Liebster. Simone's parents were in the Holocaust and suffered greatly in concentration camps. Their experiences are told in this website, along with details of the camps they were in. Such detail contributes to the historical paper because it informs people of the whereabouts of Simone's parents.

"Their Modern Development & Growth." Jehovah's Witnesses-Who Are They? What Do They Believe? Georgetown, Ontario, Canada: Watchtower Bible & Tract Society of Canada, 2000.
This is a brochure that serves as a secondary document that discusses the development of Jehovah's Witnesses starting in the late nineteenth century. It will help the historical paper for the introduction of how Witnesses started and how they spread. Such information may then lead to how Witnesses existed in Germany.

University of Minnesota. "Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany." Center for Holocaust & Genocide Studies. Retrieved 29 Nov. 2007. <<http://chgs.umn.edu/museum/responses/steyer/jwitnesses.html>>
The University of Minnesota has a research website that includes research on the Witnesses in Germany. It also gives primary documents written by Witnesses who were in concentration camps (e.g. Marcel Sutter). In the document, a historical reason contributes to the reason why Witnesses were persecuted. Since the Lutheran and Catholic churches objected to the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses and accused them of being heretics, Witnesses were disliked.

"Victims of the Nazi Era." Holocaust Teacher Resource Center. 1997 Retrieved 29 Nov. 2007. <<http://www.holocaust-trc.org/Jehovah.htm>>

The Holocaust Teachers Resource Center website focuses on the history of Jehovah's Witnesses in the Holocaust. It gives reasons why Jehovah's Witnesses were persecuted and describes the efforts the Nazis put into trying to destroy the society of Jehovah's Witnesses. Such information can contribute greatly to the historical paper for its knowledge on the history of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Weber, Louis. The Holocaust Chronicle. Lincolnwood, Illinois: Publications International, Ltd. 2003.

This is a secondary source that includes a chronology of the Holocaust from the beginning to the end. It also focuses on the Jews that were persecuted. Such information can contribute to the perspectives of Jews and their reactions to the Holocaust. It brings contrast and comparisons between the Witnesses and Jews.

"Witnesses to the Most Distant Part of the Earth." Jehovah's Witnesses-Proclaimers of God's Kingdom. Brooklyn, NY: Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, 1993.

This document gives the statistics of the number of Jehovah's Witnesses in 116 lands during the early twentieth century. It also gives information on the estimate of the population of Jehovah's Witnesses in Germany. Such data would be essential because it can be used to compare the population of Germans to Jehovah's Witnesses who did not take part in Germany's army.

Wrobel, Johannes. "The Buchenwald Series: Watercolors by the Jehovah's Witness Johannes Steyer." Edition-Temmen. Retrieved 11 Oct. 2007. <<http://www.edition-temmen.com/pictures/index.html>>

As a secondary document, Johannes Wrobel discusses a Holocaust survivor's life and watercolor paintings. He quotes a Holocaust survivor named Johannes Steyer. Moving from camp to camp, various trials were endured because he did not submit to the government's demand for him to be in the military. Later on, Wrobel informs readers of Steyer's joy in being liberated from the Nazis. Wrobel's deep evaluation of Steyer contributes to my understanding of the watercolor paintings Steyer painted.